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DECEMBER MEETING.

The Society held their stated monthly meeting on Thursday, Dec. 11, at noon, at their rooms in Tremont Street, Boston ; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Librarian announced donations from the Trustees of the Boston Public Library ; Charles Homer, Esq., of Hartford, Conn. ; Rev. Dr. Sprague ; Moses Kimball, William B. Shedd, and William V. Wells, Esqs. ; and from Messrs. Savage, Sibley, Washburn, and Winthrop, of this Society.

The President presented to the Society a copy of the portrait of John Winthrop, jun., Governor of Connecticut, and eldest son of the Governor of Massachusetts.

Whereupon, on motion of Rev. Dr. LOTHROP, the thanks of the Society were offered to the President for this very acceptable gift.

A donation was received from Captain Cassius Darling, of a representation of a Chinese funeral and a Javanese wedding.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Captain Darling for this donation.

Dr. LOTHROP, from the Committee on the "Dowse Library," reported as follows ; viz. : —

The Committee, in conjunction with Mr. Livermore, one of the executors, have visited the library, and taken measurements of the space which it now occupies in the late residence of Mr. Dowse. They find that it is too small to fill exclusively

either of the three large rooms of the Society, and too large to be placed in either of the two small rooms.

The provision of the gift, that the books shall "be preserved for ever in a room by themselves, to be used only in said room," may admit, perhaps, of two interpretations,—one more limited, less absolute, than the other. It may be regarded as simply intended to prevent the books being separated, scattered, mixed up with the other books of our library,—placed upon different shelves, in several rooms, in such way as taste, convenience, or judgment, might dictate; and, upon this idea, its strict legal requirements would be met, provided the books were kept together in one room, in a compact form, in cases, distinctly marked the "Dowse Library," without, however, excluding other books from the same room. Or the provision in the gift may be regarded as absolute, requiring that the books shall be preserved by themselves in a room from which all other books are excluded.

Your Committee think the latter interpretation is the one to be adopted; or, rather, they think that the Society owe it to themselves and the memory of Mr. Dowse, that his splendid gift should be so placed and arranged as that its full extent, value, and importance can be at once seen and appreciated, and in a room made attractive, agreeable, and interesting,—a room in which we should have some pride in exhibiting it to strangers, and into which we should not be ashamed to introduce Mr. Dowse himself, were he to return to earth, or had we the power to show him the disposition we had made of the treasures, so precious to himself, which he had intrusted to our care.

Your Committee think that this can be done without any great alteration in existing arrangements, or any permanent inconvenience to the Society, if the inner or back room of the second story be taken for the Dowse Library. If this room be fitted up with cases containing six shelves, the library would just cover the several sides of the room. In these cases,

beneath the consulting shelf, might be compartments, in which might be kept the choice manuscripts, the important papers, of the Society, and various articles belonging to its cabinet. In the centre of the room, opposite the door, might be placed the portrait of Mr. Dowse; and around the walls, in the space above the cases, might be arranged some of the best or most appropriate pictures now in possession of the Society. In due time, busts would be placed here and there on the top of the cases; and thus the Dowse-Library room of the Massachusetts Historical Society would be an agreeable, impressive, and instructive apartment, where all visitors, and the members of the Society themselves, would be taught a noble lesson,—a lesson of more value, perhaps, than any thing contained in the books themselves.

Thus fitted up, the room could be used, if thought desirable, for the monthly meetings of the Society, and thus the library proper be left free, at those times, for the use of the members or others who may be consulting it.

The Committee would respectfully recommend that the Library of the late Thomas Dowse — his noble gift to the Massachusetts Historical Society — be, on its removal from his late residence, placed in the inner back room of the second story.

They add, in conclusion, that they are permitted to say, that there is every probability that the cost of fitting up the room for the reception of the library, &c., will not be a charge upon the funds of the Society.

The foregoing report having been read, it was voted to adopt the same.

NATHANIEL INGERSOLL BOWDITCH, Esq., was elected a Resident Member, *vice* Mr. Hildreth.

WILLIAM PAVER, Esq., of York, England, was elected a Corresponding Member.

On motion of Mr. SAVAGE, — *Voted*, That Thomas C.

Amory, jun., Esq., being engaged in preparing a biographical memoir of his grandfather, James Sullivan, first President of this Society, and afterwards Governor of Massachusetts, be allowed by the Librarian to make use of any manuscript in our rooms, under the rules of the Society; and that he may consult any volumes in the library, with liberty to borrow any of the latter which members would be permitted to take, giving receipt therefor; and this indulgence shall extend for one year from this date.

Dr. WEBB read sundry passages from the sheets of a work now in press, being the "Life of the late John Howland," written by Rev. Edwin M. Stone.

SPECIAL MEETING, DEC. 22.

A special meeting of the Society, called by the Standing Committee, was held at the house of the Recording Secretary, Joseph Willard, Esq., No. 60, Pinckney Street, Boston, on Monday evening, Dec. 22, at half-past seven o'clock; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The President, as the result of his examination of the Records of the Society touching the number of times the Society had celebrated the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims, reported, — That there had been various propositions to that effect, but that there had been only one such celebration; viz., on Dec. 22, 1813,